Maria King Celebrates 13th Birthday

Maria King, center front, celebrated her 13th birthday last Thursday evening with a party at A. J. Skateworld. Attending were Herbie Jones, Darryl Martin, Don Goin, Janice Abernathy, Sidney Abernathy, Eve Thomas, Bruce Carter, Wesley Baldwin, A. C. Martin, Scott Almond, Donna Abernathy, James Woody, Tracy Goin and Susan Goggin. Maria is the daughter of Mrs. Gwen King of Appomattox and Ralph King of Lynchburg.

"Mr. Snowman"

With onions for eyes, peanuts for teeth, a jaunty straw hat atop his head and a colorful necktie, "Mr. Snowman" stands ready on Atwood street to greet any passer-by. He's . . . almost as big as his designer, Percy Thompson, shown in the background.

Sweetheart Banquet

The annual Sweetheart Banquet of Providence Baptist Church at Red House was held February 13, 1979 at 6:30 p.m. The banquet was held for the youth of the church. The youth elected by vote a king and queen for this banquet. Mr. Michael Reeves, son of Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Reeves, and Miss Zoey Grishaw, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Buster Grishaw, were elected Sweetheart King and Queen for 1979-80.

The Queen was crowned by Miss Susan Marston, the former "Miss Sweetheart", King was crowned by Mr. Jim Bennett, the former, "Mr. Sweetheart."

We would like to congratulate Miss Grishaw and Mr. Reeves on their achievement.

Registration Groups at Appomattox Middle School

Counselors at Appomattox Middle School are having registration group sessions for 7th and 8th grade this week. During these sessions, the requirements for graduation are discussed and students plan their program of studies for the next years in high school. Parents have been invited to participate in the career conferences that their children will be having throughout the rest of the school year. If parents wish to participate in the career conferences they should let the counselors know of this desire. Victor Meadows is the 7th grade counselor and Bolling Carter is 8th grade counselor. Guidance office phone number is 352-2135.

MISS WHITE'S 4-H CLUB

Miss White's 4-H Club met February 15, 1979. Martha Haley called the meeting to order then Bernadine Garrett led us in the 4-H Pledge and Tracy Tweedy led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag. Ann Hancock and Teresa Austin led us in some games. We played "Lost Child."

April Archer read us the minutes. Mrs. Walton talked about our food groups and good snacks and 6 basic nutrients. Here they are: Protein, Carbohydrates, Fats, Minerals, Water.

Our program this month will be on "Junk Food Junkie Good Nutrition."

Then Martha Haley adjourned the meeting.

Marie Neathawk, Reporter

Virginia Pork Festival

Tickets for the fifth annual Virginia Pork Festival will go on sale March 1. The Festival will be Wednesday, June 13, 1979, 4 to 8 p.m. at the Greensville County Ruritan Club Grounds near Emporia, Virginia. Those attending will have the opportunity to sample over 20 different pork products and related dishes as well as compete for country ham and pork related gift drawings held at regular intervals. Continuous live music during the Festival will lend to a carnival atmosphere.

Ticket sales policy is as follows: nine thousand tickets will be sold. Ticket orders will be limited to ten tickets per person. Tickets will be sold by mail only. Ticket price is eight dollars each. Tickets will go on sale March 1. Ticket orders postmarked before March 1, 1979 will not be honored. Ticket orders will be filled on a first come - first serve basis based on date of postmark. Each person attending must have a ticket.

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GOOD NEWS FOR HOMEMAKERS

By Shirley W. Walton
Extension Agent

Do You Know About The State Office Of Consumer Affairs?

Are you familiar with the Virginia Offices of Consumer Affairs? Do you know what it does for you as a consumer? This article is devoted to informing you, the consumer, about what is provided for us by the Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs.

On behalf of the consumer, you and me, the Office of Consumer Affairs does the following:

1. Investigate and mediate consumer complaints.
2. Refers complaints to the proper state or local regulatory agency for processing.
3. Cooperates with the Attorney General's office and/or the Commonwealth Attorney's office in taking legal action against companies accused of engaging in unfair sales or misrepresentation or fraudulent practices.
4. Handles complaints specifically against state agencies.
5. Initiates educational programs through speaking engagements, high-lighting consumer protection laws that have been passed for the consumer's benefit.
6. Cooperates with the Virginia Department of Education in getting increased emphasis on teaching consumer education in the state schools.
7. Cooperates with other state agencies and institutions of higher learning to insure a balanced community consumer education program.
8. Cooperates with businesses that wish to promote good consumer business relations.
9. Cooperates with local, state and federal consumer agencies.

As a consumer, we also need to know what the Office of Consumer Affairs does not do. The Office of Consumer Affairs has been given specific responsibilities by the General Assembly. The office is not empowered to:

1. Act as a consumer's private attorney in legal actions against merchants.
2. Give individual legal advice or counselling.
3. Make recommendations of specific firms, services, brands or products.
4. Regulate the pricing of goods and services unless there is a question of misrepresentation related to the price or service.

An individual wishing to file a complaint should complete a complaint form which may be secured from: Office of Consumer Affairs, P.O. Box 1163, 825 East Broad Street, Richmond, Virginia 23209. The toll free number for the Office of Consumer Affairs in Richmond is 1-800-552-9963. Before filing a formal complaint, a consumer should:

1. Contact the merchant and attempt to settle the complaint himself.
2. Obtain the complete name and address of the company and the names of the individuals with whom he has dealt.
3. Send copies of all documents relevant to his complaint to the Office of Consumer Affairs and, if possible, keep originals for himself.
4. Make certain that he has not left out any details of the transaction that could in any way be helpful to the investigation.

Homemakers, we hope that you will not need to make consumer complaints or have consumer problems, but it is nice to know that we do have a Virginia Office of Consumer Affairs with branches in several places. The one nearest us in the Richmond Office. There is also an office in Roanoke. The only office having the toll free number is the Richmond location.

Homemakers, should you have a homemaking question or problem, you may call us at 352-8244 or write the Appomattox County Extension Office, P.O. Box 488, Appomattox, Virginia 24522. It is always a pleasure to hear from you and to help you in any way possible. Have a good week!

Then And Now

By Frances H. Paulette

Necessities

Just a short time ago I heard a lady, (she is "forty-ish", I believe), make a statement something like this: "I 've worked all of my life to be able to have all the conveniences I enjoy today, but with the cost of energy getting higher and higher every day it's beginning to look like I may have to go back to the 'old way' of living after all!"

The 'old way'? Ah yes . . .

There are so many things, that, to our parents and grandparents would have been luxuries but to us they are necessities. The loss of electricity recently due to an ice storm made us very much aware of just how much we take for granted. More than a few of us had to leave our homes until electricity could be restored. Without automatic heat, hot water, washers, dryers, our modern range and microwave ovens and even our color TV's we couldn't cope.

Today, more and more families are installing wood-burning stoves as a 'back-up' for heating and cooking in the event of disrupted electrical services to save fuel. When, either by radio or television, a storm is forecast, homeowners check their wood supply to make sure they will have sufficient to carry them through the emergency.

Local grocery stores have noted an up-surge in shopping when a snow storm is predicted . . . families making sure the food supply is adequate.

Just what did the family living back THEN do when a storm was brewing? In fact, just how did they tell when a storm was brewing?

With no radio or television to forewarn them of approaching storms, families living many years ago had to depend on other means of weather prediction. They relied, to a great extent, on "sayings." handed down from generation to generation and to signs of nature.

There is an old saying that goes,

"Sky red in the morning is a sailor's fair warning,
Sky red at night is a sailor's delight.

The close observation of the habits of birds and animals often gave a clue to what kind of weather to expect.

"Oldimers" believed that it would be a bad winter if squirrels began gathering nuts early (as early as September). If the fur or the hair on animals such as horses and sheep, dogs, etc. was thicker than usual, it was a definite indication of an extremely cold winter in the offering. If birds ate all the wild berries early it was another sign of a hard winter.

The woolly worm, according to a weather sign considered to be very dependable back THEN, told of a bad winter if the black band on his back was wide. The more black or dark brown there was, and/or the wider the black stripe, the worse the winter. Some claimed that if he was "black in front' the bad weather was ahead; if he was 'black behind', the worst weather was past. If he is brown at both ends and orange in the middle, the winter will be mild.

Many years ago families often forecasted weather by weather! For instance, two frosts and lots of rain meant cold weather was near. For every fog in August there would be a snowy day in the winter to come.

Look out if it snows "Croselegged" . . . there was going to be a deep one.

If the first snow of the season stays on the ground for three days, another one will come on top of it.

Regardless of how far-fetched or seemingly unreliable these 'signs' are to us, families living THEN did have their own unique way of knowing what to expect weatherwise.

Let's look at an "imaginery family" of THEN after the 'signs' had said "Look out, rough weather is on the way!" . . .

The big black pot was simmering on the back of the kitchen stove and giving forth aroma that was nothing less than 'mouth watering.'

The Benjamin children didn't need anything to stimulate their appetites, the four mile walk from school in the biting December wind had taken care of that.

The school lunches Mama had packed in their lunch buckets had been satisfying but even Mama's sausage biscuits, baked sweet potatoes and dried apple puffs wore out in a hurry with two growing children.

Mama wasn't in the big warm kitchen, instead she was in the 'front room' bending over the big blanket chest that had belonged to Grandma.

"Here, Susie," she called, "take these up the stairs when you go", and she handed her two beautiful handmade quilts.

"Papa says the signs are right and we're sure to get our first snow storm of the season tonight."

Susie took one of the quilts and thrust the other one at her brother, Jerome.

"Here", she said, "you take your own quilt or freeze to death. Why should I carry your quilt upstairs?"

"Here, here", Mama called," you quit that fussin' and just be glad we had that quilting party in the fall."

Up the stairs Susie scampered and when she reached the door to her bedroom she made a dive for the big, high poster bed with the feather tick.

Susie loved to lay in that downy warmth of the feather bed and just think. Staring at the ceiling she realized how fortunate she was to have a bedroom all to herself. Mama and Papa weren't rich but they weren't poor either . . . maybe you could say "well-off" was a more accurate description of her family. There was no time to linger, Mama was already calling to her.

"Susan Carolyn Benjamin , get down here this minute, there are chores to be done."

Without a word Susie went down the stairs, grabbed a piece of 'hoe-cake' from the 'warming closet' of the stove and reached for the basket beside the woodbox. It was her job to keep the chip basket filled at all times; she might even have to fill a second one, what with the approaching storm and all.

'Chips' were pieces of wood that fell to the ground whenever Papa or Jerome cut wood. They were used to supplement the 'lightwood' kindling used to get a fire going. (Very seldon during the rough weather did the fire 'go out', but occasionally it needed a bit of help to get going in the morning.

Jerome was hurrying out to the smokehouse; whenever there were signs of a bad 'spell' of weather, Mama would be sure that there would be an extra side of meat in the house.

"Oh my," sighed Susie as she went about her chores, "Mama was such a worrier! I'll be glad when we can have things like all those I've read about in those magazines that Cousin Hilary brought down from the city.

"Just think," Susie went on talking to her self as she continued with her chores, "Electricity to give us lights . . . no more lamps to wash and trim; a stove to cook with that didn't need wood, maybe even heat and all kinds of good things. If only we could have electricity, all our worries would be over! . . .

It's good our imaginery Susie didn't live in February of 1979. But, even with all of our inconvenience caused by the ice storm, we should be so thankful for all the things we have that make life easier . . . you know, all those necessities of life.

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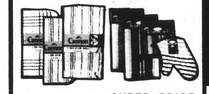

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